

Allen M. Ruggles

These Adolescents
Their Right to Grow Up

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THESE ADOLESCENTS

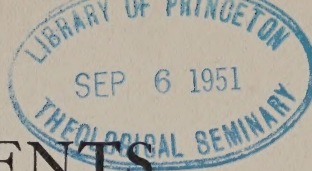
Their Right to Grow Up

by

ALLEN MEAD RUGGLES

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THESE ADOLESCENTS *THEIR RIGHT TO GROW UP*

Problems and Case Studies

by ✓

ALLEN MEAD RUGGLES

*Compliments of
Allen M. Ruggles*

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THE BOOK AND THE AUTHOR

Whatever catastrophic changes society may undergo, the problems of the individual always remain. Some of these are suggested in this book, based on case studies gathered over a period of years by the author and his classes in adolescent psychology.

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THESE ADOLESCENTS

THEIR RIGHT TO GROW UP

I

A CHALLENGE TO PARENTS

ADOLESCENTS have a right to grow up. Parents have a duty: to provide every opportunity for the normal maturing of their sons and daughters.

The path to maturity is beset by many dangers, and among the greatest of these are those unintentionally presented by parents. Mothers are more to be feared than fathers. Before adolescence, the contact between mother and child is much closer than is that between father and child; and this is the time when fundamental habits and attitudes are formed.

Some are so shackled and bound in childhood that infantile habits, attitudes, and desires continue throughout adolescence. Some in their struggle to grow up bring untold unhappiness and worry to their parents, while others through tact, good judgment, and diplomacy avoid undue friction and finally win out in spite of the parents. A large number develop normally in most traits but are lacking in others, while a few who are wisely guided develop normally through childhood and adolescence and by adulthood have acquired a well-rounded set of maturities.

The right to grow up implies the right to a complete set of maturities. What then are these maturities? What are the criteria for judging of complete maturity?

The mature adult measures up to the following criteria:

1. *He is emotionally developed.* He acts emotionally as an adult should act. If his work takes him away from home, he can go without undue emotional upset. He is reasonably successful in meeting the perplexing situations of life. He faces reality squarely and at least attempts to solve his problems by reason rather than under the stress of emotions. His emotional responses are consistent with the significance of the situations arousing them.

2. *He makes his own decisions.* He is self-reliant. He is practiced in making decisions, and has a reasonable confidence in his own judgment. He wisely selects sources from which to secure facts or suggestions on which to base his decisions, but he makes the decisions for himself. His judgments are the result of reasoning rather than of strong feelings and prejudices.

3. *He is capable of accepting responsibility.* He does his part in the organization and routine of the home, the school, and the community, and does not have to be watched, waited on, or picked up after like the poorly brought-up child. When he accepts responsibility of any sort, he can be depended upon to carry it through.

4. *He is socially adjusted.* He enters easily into the social and community life about him, and does it with enjoyment. He is concerned with the welfare and happiness of others and has outgrown the narrow self-centeredness of his earlier years of childhood. He enjoys the company of those of his own age of the opposite sex and is prepared to enter into the relationship of marriage, sharing in the "give and take" of such relationship.

Adolescence is the final, the crucial stage, in the process of growing up. Adolescence is the time when progress in growing up is most apparent. Its beginnings, however, are laid in childhood. Its effects are seen in adulthood. Very few adults have attained a complete set of maturities. As one learns to know people better, their handicapping immaturities become more and more apparent.

By most parents, the adolescent is looked upon as a child, yet everything in the makeup of the normal adolescent suggests maturing. Bodily characteristics of the adult are apparent: breast and hip developments in the girl and appearance of the beard in the boy. In physique they are becoming mature. They notice it, their friends notice it. Remember: the adolescent is capable of reproducing his kind. Nature recognizes that, even though the parent rebels at the thought.

Among primitive peoples, the adolescent is as a fact considered grown up. Among many tribes this advent of physiological maturity is recognized and celebrated by elaborate pubic ceremonies. The boy is taken away from the women and children and associates with the older men of the tribe. His further development does not depend upon his mother. He is instructed by the older men in the

duties and responsibilities of adulthood.

Even in the early colonial days of our own country the average age of marriage was fourteen for girls and sixteen for boys. Some parents may throw up their hands in horror at the early age at which our colonial grandparents married—at their “immaturity.” Nevertheless these “children” set out and made homes of their own and many a parent today proudly traces ancestry back to such “children.”

Times have changed. Today a much longer period of economic dependency is necessary. This complicates the problem. Thousands of young people are in their later teens before they finish high school and in their twenties before they finish college. On the average they marry about ten years later than did the colonial boys and girls. Although in colonial times adolescents married, had homes of their own, and were generally considered as adults, today those of the same age and older are living in the homes of their parents and are usually considered not as grown-ups but only as children. Accompanying this economic dependency is often a whole flock of irritating and crippling immaturities.

In the earlier days of our country, the conditions for developing personal independence and self-reliance, for helping the child to grow up, were present in much larger degree. Families were large as a rule, living conditions were not easy, and parents had little time or inclination to do those things that prevent a child from growing up. Thus the youth came to adolescence much better prepared than children of today. Even today, under certain social and economic conditions, we find children in early adolescence better prepared to take on the responsibilities of adulthood than others several years older, or even than some adults. This is especially true in the case of children in large families and of those families living on farms, where there are so many things to be done that each member of the family by necessity has his own duties and

responsibilities.

With prolonged economic dependency come added responsibilities for the parents. If the child is to develop as he should, the parents must definitely plan for situations that will foster this growing up process. All too often, however, this lengthening period of economic dependency gives rise to another problem. There is conflict between parent and child. Here is a young adult trying to live with parents who still consider him as a child and treat him as a child. Worse than that, they frequently want to keep him a child.

Under these conditions, the adolescent is a problem to the parents, while the parents are a problem to the adolescent. Had the parent-child relationship developed as the child advanced in years, this might not be a problem. All too often, however, habit does its work and the attitude of the parents toward the offspring, fixed and static for so long, makes it difficult for them now to think of him as a young adult, rather than as a child.

Ordinarily this is a trying period for both parent and adolescent. Each is irritated by the apparent inconsistencies and lack of understanding of the other. Each looks upon the other as unreasonable. Each develops emotional sore spots and soon the clash between age and youth is on.

The adolescent has the problem of growing up. The parent presents the obstacles. The parent holds fast to his particular ideal of adolescent behavior, and his sons and daughters just won't conform and help him realize this ideal. The point of view of neither parent nor adolescent is what it should be. Both really have a common problem: the problem of growing up.

Our attention here is centered upon adolescence, but adolescence has its beginnings in childhood, and out of adolescence comes the adult. To understand adolescence, we must consider childhood. That is where we shall start.

What can happen and is happening when parents do

not realize the significance of full maturing of their sons and daughters? Actual life cases presented in this book tell their own story. Let us face the facts squarely as we view the procession of the handicapped, stretching from infancy to adulthood—a procession of those handicapped in the process of growing up.

II

THE TRAIL OF THE HANDICAPPED: CHILDHOOD

Joyously overcome by the sense of possession, the mother of a baby, so helpless and lovable, often seems to forget that some day that baby will have to live the life of an adult. And if he is to be a success, in the full sense of the world, he must then possess an adult's equipment of maturities. He must be grown up.

Credit in academic courses in psychology and child training is no passport to successful parenthood. It is understanding that counts, understanding of what growing up really means, and of the significance of an early beginning. It takes maturity in a parent to guide a child successfully to maturity.

What many mothers forget or do not understand is that the process of maturing begins in infancy and gradually progresses through childhood and adolescence. When mental, social or emotional development is retarded during childhood by a domineering or an oversolicitous mother, the child enters adolescence a handicapped human being. Successful development during adolescence is largely dependent upon a gradual growth and development during childhood.

Thus before considering the adolescent, we turn our attention toward the beginning of the trail of the handicapped where prophesy is in the making.

Billy's Mother Was a College Graduate

Billy's mother is a college graduate and has taught for several years. His home is lovely, and Billy has every advantage in the way of books, extensive trips, and parents who are always ready to discuss things that interest him. Billy's intelligence is very high.

When Billy started to school, his mother accompanied him for many days, although the distance of the school from his home is only one block. Later she visited the school four or five times a month in order to compare him with the other students and to check on the methods used. Billy spent recesses holding his teacher's hand and astounding her with his excellent vocabulary and many intelligent questions.

When Billy started to school, he had never put on his wraps alone, and the kindergarten teacher helped him do this throughout the year. He was helped in nearly everything by his parents and teacher. He could not play with his classmates. He did not know how, and the other pupils got the habit of "watching Billy" and tormenting him in many ways.

His life in the first grade was a duplicate of his year in kindergarten. His first grade teacher put his wraps on for him and his parents continued to protect him and cater to him in every way possible.

The second grade teacher understood better what Billy needed and refused to coddle him as the others had. As a result her method made Billy lean on himself to put his wraps on, although unknown to her he often would go to the kindergarten teacher who would help him. Incidentally, the second grade teacher lost her job because of her "unsympathetic" attitude toward Billy. The father had influence with the board!

By the time he reached the fourth grade, Billy's peculiarities were very firmly established. He had no knowledge of how to play with other children, and preferred to spend his recess period with the janitor. His mother continued to spend much time at school and went with him when he took his music lessons.

His Mother Watched His Food and Sleep

Byron Lee is now six years of age. His mother has a Master's degree in Home Economics and has had work in psychology, but she is rapidly ruining her child's life. Ever since he was born, he has had correct food, exercise, and sleep, but with that the correctness has stopped. The mother apparently has failed to apply her psychology.

The worst thing about the whole situation is that the mother does not realize how far short she is failing in her job of being a mother. While she has worried and nagged the child until he is in an extremely nervous condition, her sense of protecting him causes her to go to school once each week to see that he is not being mistreated by the teacher or other children. Of course, it is apparent to almost everyone that the child has more to fear from his mother than from anyone else.

When childhood development progresses normally, each year shows new accomplishments on the part of the child. He becomes less and less dependent on the mother, does more and more for himself and makes increasing contributions to the routine of the household.

The fond mother who babies most of the masculinity out of her boy probably has little conception of the suffer-

ing that she is laying in store for him by such treatment. He may possibly get through the grades without too much difficulty; but when he reaches high school, then the trouble begins.

Mother's pet, called by others a "sissy," sometimes revolts and compensates by going to extremes in what he thinks of as mannish behaviour.

Harold's Mother Loved to Help Him

Harold's mother always helped him in doing the things that he should have been able to do for himself. He depended upon his mother to lace his shoes, long after he should have done it for himself. He did not take a bath by himself until he was seventeen years of age and even then his mother would help him in scrubbing his back.

From Sissy to Bully

Vernon was petted and cuddled all during his childhood. If he got in an argument with a playmate, as to who was going to play with the wagon or the scooter or some other plaything, he would call his mother and she, regardless of the circumstances, would give Vernon the one he wanted. If "mother's little darling" was mistreated by anyone, his mother would go straight to the other child's parents and tell them what failures they were in raising their child.

When Vernon was in highschool, the students called him "siss." Vernon, realizing that everyone was making fun of him, set out to show them that he was just as much of a man as any other boy. He started drinking, cutting classes, and in a month's time became the bully of the school. This was possible because Vernon was six feet two inches tall and weighed one hundred and ninety-five pounds, at the age of seventeen.

Not very long ago Vernon's father refused to give him twenty-five cents to use in going swimming, and Vernon cried like a baby.

III

THE TRAIL OF THE HANDICAPPED: ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence, the period of emancipation from the bonds of childhood, admits children with all degrees of preparedness. For those who have been guided through a normal growth from early infancy, the transition into the broader life of adolescence is an easy and almost imperceptible one. Growth toward maturity, begun in infancy, continues but at an accelerated rate. The parents who have wisely guided their offspring through childhood, now allow the young adults all the freedom that can be wisely used, "guiding through joint planning and con-

certed endeavor toward a self-directed maturity."

The mother who forces herself into the picture, and is virtually a third party, when her daughter begins to date, is difficult to understand, yet her type is not uncommon. Such a mother either fails to understand adolescence; thinks of her own pleasure, at the expense of her daughter's social growth; deceives herself into thinking that her presence is essential for her daughter's happiness; or else has little confidence in the integrity or wisdom of her daughter.

If the reason is a lack of confidence in the daughter's ability to care for herself, it is simply an admission of failure in guidance. If this be the case, the mother's problem is to give the daughter wise and sympathetic guidance and develop in her those qualities and attitudes that will make her immune to any improper advances by her dates. Many a girl, early put out on her own, has such qualities and attitudes. Why then should one not expect to find them in the daughter of parents who are deeply concerned about her welfare, providing of course that such parents are understanding and wise?

The boy or girl who knows many of the opposite sex is the one whose prospects of choosing wisely are the best. To choose a life companion who will be congenial usually requires a wide acquaintanceship with those of the opposite sex and this acquaintance is largely a matter of guidance during adolescence. If the boy or girl has had the proper training and guidance up to this point, his ideals will be such that parents have little to fear. They can then trust the adolescent and trust is something that thrills him and is a most stabilizing force.

Most of the adolescents along our trail of the handicapped entered adolescence unprepared: and beside each of these marches the mother, connected by a psychic umbilical cord which has not as yet been cut, still caring for the psychologically unweaned son or daughter. Now for a survey of these handicapped adolescents.

Like our first cases all of these are true stories, many of them written up by college students.

Catherine's Mother Went With Her to College

Catherine is the only daughter of wealthy parents. From the time of her birth, the goodies of life have been crammed down her throat. She began taking singing and dancing lessons at a very early age. Her mother accompanied her to her lessons, sat through the lesson and then sat with Catherine while she practiced. In spite of this Catherine became quite skilled in both dancing and voice and gives many public performances. Everyday, as well as for these performances, her mother carefully and tenderly dresses her. Her mother could not bear to see her grow up and when Catherine began to date, her mother accompanied her, purchasing tickets and treating her and her date as two small children.

When it came time for Catherine to go away to college, she planned on furthering her study at an exclusive school in Boston. She left home as many young people do except for the many little attentions of her mother. A month later, however, her mother had rented an apartment in Boston, leaving her husband at home, and Catherine began living with her mother instead of living at the school. Her mother has now been with her in Boston for two years and will probably be maid to Catherine the rest of her life, for the poor girl cannot dress herself, select her clothing, care for her toilette, pack a bag or do many trivial things that all people should be able to do for themselves.

Everywhere that Johnny Went

John's mother always accompanied him wherever he went. He was forbidden to attend the movies. If he had smoked a cigarette, his mother would have thought that he had committed the unpardonable sin.

When John went to college, he greatly missed his mother's care and was very unhappy for months. He made several trips home during the semester and his parents visited him about the same number of times. The distance was about three hundred miles. He hardly knew how to take care of himself without his mother's help, and was the object of constant jabs and sharp remarks from other students.

One vacation, when he was home, John and a friend went to a concert with their dates. At the intermission, it was announced that there was an urgent call for John. He went to the phone. It was his mother who had called him. She was afraid to have him drive home alone as there had been a street car wreck in the city. She wanted him to wait until she could take a taxi down town so that she could come home with him. It was only after considerable persuasion that she consented to let him come home alone. John was then twenty years of age.

Martha's Mother Did the Planning

When Martha entered senior highschool, Ed, a boy well known to the family, became interested in her. He began taking her to ball games, dances, and parties. But, on each occasion, Martha's mother accompanied them, if it were at all possible. Finally, Ed became disgusted with the fond mother's tagging along and did not have any

more dates with Martha.

Ed and Martha entered college. All of Martha's friends had dates but Martha had none. Her mother became alarmed when she saw that her daughter was lacking in boy friends. "Perhaps," she thought, "if Ed would start rushing Martha, the other boys would become interested in her." But each time the mother called Ed and tactfully suggested a place that he and Martha might go, Ed always had another engagement.

Martha has graduated from college. As a musician she is a success and in demand, but socially she is a failure. She has no boy friends and very few girl friends. The domineering mother now asks the "why of it all."

The Neighbors Wondered Why Mary Never Married

Mary was a normal girl in every way—pretty, bright, full of life, and of fair common sense. Her mother's attitude toward social life was normal, but not so with her father's, and here was the difficulty. The father had declared that "Mary cannot go with the boys until she is through school. The man she marries is the only man she need go with." The father seemed to think that some prince charming would see Mary and marry her without dates. He did not intend for her to work after graduation from college. She was to have an education for cultural purposes solely. Poor Mary seemed destined to the life of a wax doll on a pedestal, bearing the sign: "Hands Off."

Through strategy Mary managed to have dates, but it was not long before the father learned of this. He then took a new stand; Mary was not to receive a gift of any kind from a boy or man. To him, gifts were only enticements to dishonorable behavior. There was many a scene between Mary and her father. He threatened to kill her if she did not obey, saying: "I'd rather see you in your grave any day than to even have to think that you might in any way disgrace the dear old family name."

The adolescent who is not permitted to enter into the give and take relationships of the social group to which he belongs, and thus make his place by his own merits, is being deprived of something which is his right. The development of habits of social adjustment are being thwarted, and ideas of social justice distorted.

Learning to live involves learning to live with other people. Most people like people, but there are those who do not. They are usually the discontents of society, and very seldom are successful. They have very few lasting friends. Such people are not mature. They are the victims of early training, as a rule, and pass through life along the road of the handicapped.

The mature person has consideration for the rights and feelings of others. One who does not have this con-

sideration is a constant source of irritation to those among whom he lives. The unhappiness caused by a thief who robs a home of hundreds of dollars worth of personal property is small compared with the sum total of unhappiness and irritation caused family and friends by one who does not have a normally developed consideration for the rights and feelings of others. This irritating lack of consideration for the rights of others is difficult for its possessor to recognize, and he would be offended if it were referred to as it rightly may be, as an infantile hangover.

Such irritating traits of immaturity manifest themselves in many ways. Their nature depends largely upon the particular deficiencies in early training, but, however, one looks at them, they are handicaps.

One delights in the fine appearing young people on a college campus, but how far short of maturity some of them are! Are they a credit to their homes, to their mothers?

The Town's Most Popular Girl

Ruth Chase, the victim of an overactive mother love, was born in a small town and, though of only comfortable circumstances, has always had a definite social position which placed her as a leader of her small group of friends. Ruth's mother was never content until Ruth was made president of the clubs to which she belonged, and wanted her to be the most popular girl in her circle.

In one instance, the girls formed a small club and another girl was elected president. When Mrs. Chase learned of this, she immediately called the girls and did not rest until the duly elected president resigned and Ruth was made president in her place.

If it happened that Ruth did not have a date to a party, Mrs. Chase would call one of the girls and insist that she find some boy to take Ruth. This was not so hard to arrange as Ruth got along well with boys and was pretty. As a result of all this however, Ruth has ceased to make any decisions for herself and depends upon her mother's judgment in everything. She has become self-centered and selfish and is unhappy unless she is the center of attention.

Mrs. Chase's every thought is for the comfort of Ruth and nothing is spared for her happiness. Ruth went away to a girl's school last year and made several friends but was intimate with none of them for she long ago lost the habit of confiding in anyone but her mother. This year she was sent to a coeducational institution in the north but has been unable to adjust herself and is planning to leave at the end of the semester.

Tied to His Mother's Apron Strings

Ben was tied to his mother's apron strings. He was intelligent and not at all shy, but one rarely saw him with anyone outside of class. Although he was not disliked by his classmates, he never sought their company or joined in their outside activities. When his classes were over, he would usually be met by his mother in the car and she would drive him home.

One night when I was in their home, the mother—who did most of the talking—remarked: "I read all of Ben's lessons with him and I find that he is then better prepared for his tests. I can ask him questions before reviews." Keeping up with her son in his studies was making the mother intellectually fine, but what was it doing to Ben?

Lament of a Room-Mate

Helen is constantly seeking advice from me about her clothes, but if I suggest a change, she is almost hurt and thinks that I have bad taste. She expects to be waited on and treated as a guest. She spends hours in front of our only mirror, apparently oblivious of the fact that I am trying to see in it too, over her shoulder and beside her.

I like a clean room and she thinks that I do not understand that she has no time to spend picking up such trifles as coats, boxes, and shoes. Just the other day our room had to be straightened up by a certain time and she begged me not to do a thing; she would take care of everything. The time arrived and passed. Thirty minutes later I began to dust and just then she returned. She had been playing around in and out of the room, but had not completed one single thing. When she saw me, dust cloth in hand, she broke out crying, saying that I did not trust her, that no one did, that she had never had to do this sort of thing before, and that she wished that she were home, the only place where she felt secure.

She is my roommate, I do not understand her, but I am trying to. I only hope that I will be able to help her. I believe she can be helped and perhaps I am the one to do it. Who knows?

The First Week She Cried

Of course it is malicious, but remember; I'm the one who suffered!

She was eighteen, very pretty, and away from home for the first time. She had had a serious illness in her earlier life and the family was well impressed with the idea. Woe is me; she was my roommate!

The first week she cried most of the time. Her family came to see her at the end of the week and spent several hours of my valuable time telling me how nervous she was and how I must watch after her. Being eighteen myself, I solemnly undertook the responsibility.

The following week her family was called away on business, so it was up to me. When she put up a howl, I fell into the habit of taking her with me wherever I was going, or providing something of equal interest for her to do. It was a mistake. Here are some of the results.

She was only too glad to be a third on any date I had. When I got her dates with boys, she spent most of the evening talking of the things her dad and brother could do.

She quarreled with the other girls in the dormitory and asked me to settle her disputes; this was almost daily.

I had to help her study her lessons because she could not think unless she talked aloud to someone. Her dad had been studying with her that way ever since she was in the primer.

No matter what kind of a meeting I attended, or whom I was with, she cried when I left her behind. It had long been a habit of mine to have Sunday dinner with a group of special friends. I included her when possible, otherwise I stayed at home. It came near wrecking some friendships that I valued very much.

You figure out the rest. Just remembering makes me ill. That's why I am gray around the temples at the ripe old age of twenty-two.

There are all degrees of retardation in the growing up process. Some people reach the end of adolescence, still so immature and with habits of immaturity so firmly fixed that a life of unhappiness and failure is easily evident. They are among the tragedies of existence.

Then there are others whose handicaps are not so serious: who, even if the handicaps are not overcome, may live a fairly successful and happy life.

Lastly there are those who realize their handicaps and, largely because of fortunate environmental influences, make a serious effort to overcome the habits and attitudes that otherwise would keep them from enjoying the life that might be theirs to enjoy. Such a one is the college girl who wrote the following.

Just We Three

I feel that my parents made a mistake in doing practically everything for me, such as washing my clothes, sewing, ironing, and keeping my room clean. I never had any specific duties about the house. I will say this much, however, that living in a sorority house for three years has certainly made a change in me.

Having always depended upon the wisdom and counsel of my parents, I find myself, even yet, occasionally calling them long-distance for advice. Because my clothes were always selected for me, I find it difficult now to choose my things wisely, as well as economically. I received my first allowance when I was a freshman in college, and believe me, I was amazed at my inability to make it last through the week.

In my childhood, if I quarreled with other playmates, I received all the consolation and sympathy I could possibly have asked from my parents. Only when I had done something that provoked my father immeasurably, did I hear him say anything about my being in the wrong.

I realize that, in many ways, this is very unfair to my parents, for they have given me everything that they possibly could, and more

too. Let it be understood that I fully appreciate it. But, although the love that exists among us three is probably stronger and greater than that of thousands of children and parents, I do wish that I might have been given the chance to stand on my own two feet.

Still Treated as a Child

I am twenty-three years old. I am teaching close to home, driving back and forth every day. My mother still expects me to obey her as I did when I was a little girl. I must be home early and she must know exactly where I have been every minute. I have been having dates for several years, but every time my parents think that I am getting interested in a boy, they manage to find something wrong with him, so that I have to stop.

They would not let me date during high school for fear it would interfere with my work, but they were surely mistaken. I day-dreamed and brooded about it and lost more time than I would have lost with an occasional date. I had a terrible feeling because of this injustice, as I saw it. Lots and lots of nights I spent crying about it when I should have been studying. It developed a sense of shame in me because I was growing up and yet was still treated like a child. I remember one day when a boy walked home with me, a few weeks before I graduated, mother met me at the door and curtly ordered me in the house. I was terribly humiliated.

I have been going with a boy now for two years. We are engaged to be married, in another year. Not long ago, I called him concerning a date we had. Mother and dad thought that it was terrible, that I had called a boy on the phone. They took away my privilege of seeing him, for two weeks. I am wondering now how to tell them about my engagement. I love my mother and daddy so much, and have stood all that I have just because of my love for them.

IV

THE TRAIL OF THE HANDICAPPED: ADULTHOOD

Stupidity is a very common quality and is perhaps more incurable than wickedness. Stupidity in others is easy to see, but in oneself very difficult to discover or recognize—at least until it is too late. The parents who can calmly make a serious attempt to understand the natural inclinations of their son or daughter and modify their guidance accordingly give evidence of a high rating for intellectual and emotional maturity. We can safely assume that such parents are mature enough to face facts squarely and are reasonably successful in keeping prejudice from coloring their reactions.

The persisting influence of the dominating mother is clearly established in the lives of those who bring our re-

view to a close. Here is the fulfillment of a prophesy that might well have been made in childhood. Handicapped child; handicapped adolescent; handicapped adult. A chain of causal relationships, and, in these cases, unbroken by the strong urges of adolescence. Thus, in adulthood, the prophesy is fulfilled: men and women who have never completely grown up, who are still under the domination of a mother who loved but couldn't let go.

Human temperaments differ. Some children succumb to domination more easily than do others and reach adolescence with habits and attitudes of maternal making firmly established. For them the adolescent urge for independence has little chance, the period of emancipation ends with the work unfinished, and another human bids fair to trudge indefinitely along the trail of the handicapped. In appearance mature, often of high intelligence, likeable and fully developed in many ways, these adults are still bound by unseen fetters, and it is only when the crisis comes that they are found wanting.

Mamma Brown Took Care of Henry

Several years ago, I taught in a military school in Indiana, and while there I had the occasion to become acquainted with a most likeable boy of twenty-two years of age who was beginning his first year as assistant band instructor in the school.

The young instructor's mother and father lived about seventy-five miles from the school. Every week and sometimes oftener, Mother Brown would drive up to see Henry, and would often bring him something absurd for his room in the barracks. One time it was a rocking chair, another time a potted plant, but many times she just came to clean Henry's room and see that he was properly dressed. Poor Henry loved his mother, but boys can be cruel in a military school and he was teased unmercifully over the ridiculous actions of his mother. He tried to explain to his mother that she was making him a "laughing stock," but mamma knew best.

One cool, brisk November day the school was being examined by government officials to see if it rated the honor roll. It was the most important day of the entire school year, and everyone had prepared for it with great effort.

Henry was to direct the band on the parade before the inspectors. All cadets and officers were to wear their white dress uniforms. These uniforms were not quite so heavy as the regular olive drab used for everyday wear, but the thought of not wearing them hadn't entered anyone's head—except Mamma Brown's. Early on the day of inspection, in drove Mamma Brown and promptly squelched the idea of

Henry changing uniforms. Henry pleaded with her, officials minced no words with her, but Henry did not wear the white uniform, neither did he show his face all day. The next day Henry was fired for being such a mollicoddle and Mamma Brown took him home with her.

After grieving himself sick in his small home town, Henry decided that he would study to be a surgeon. He would go to Chicago, and a separation from his mother was what he felt that he needed. Mamma had a wrench all prepared for this plan, for she settled Papa Brown in a furnished room, rented their home and went to Chicago with Henry. He has finished his course but has not found a suitable location as yet. Wherever he goes, his mother is planning to go with him and keep house, and incidentally see that Henry has a miserable existence. Henry would like to have a little freedom, but he can't break away.

"Lambie" Is Looking for Another Job

All of Middleton gave three cheers and a yell to welcome a new music teacher into the small town's public school system. For the first two months Mr. James fulfilled all expectations—although he was a queer fellow. His high-pitched nasal voice, underdeveloped body, and overfastidiousness were excused on the ground of his being fairly successful. Then Mother James came to live with her only beloved son. She was like her son in physical appearance, had a cough, and a wizened, hard face which isolated her from would-be friends.

Not long after the mother's arrival, Mr. James supervised a band trip to a nearby country school. It was a dark stormy night, and bad roads delayed their return until one-thirty in the morning. Parents of the high school youngsters slept placidly to the patter of the rain on the roof, or worried quietly; but not so with the mother of the college graduate. Mother James kept the apartment house dwellers awake by tramping through the halls with audible expressions of displeasure. On her third trip to the night watchman, she requested that he send out a searching party. When "Lambie" did return, he was greeted with a locked door, and it was not until he had wormed himself through a transom that he was able to subject himself to his "mamma."

Mrs. James thought that the church was asking too many favors of her darling son, and told them that if they did not stop such impositions she would keep him at home.

Mr. James enjoyed hunting and one day went out with a couple of high school boys. Two days later these two students were ordered off the place by Mother James. She felt that they were bad company for her Howard.

Last week I saw "Dear Howard." His slovenly appearance, his weak handshake, empty smile, need of a shave, and fruitless search for a new job for next year, all bespoke of loss of hope sapped by a parasitic mother.

She Kept Her Family Together

The mother of Susan, Sally, and Bob had dominated them for years through her well-planned ill health. As soon as one would get away, she had an attack and all the children would promise never to leave her again. Bob is now fifty-two years of age, Susan is

forty-six, and Sally is forty-two. Their mother has been dead two years, and all three are hopeless. Bob was a brilliant man and had no end of opportunities, but as soon as he would get started in a good business a few miles from home, his mother had an attack. The little home town had a population of only twelve hundred people, It is here that Bob has now reached the height of being the town's most able drunkard. He has nothing and thinks that it is too late to try again.

Susan and Sally did manage to get away from home long enough to take business courses. Susan became secretary to an able executive, and Sally held an equally good position in another office in the same city. Their mother could not endure having them away from home so much, so she had a very bad attack this time, and the girls resigned their positions and came home. They were popular with the young men but none of the men suited their mother, so gradually the men ceased coming. Since the mother's death recently, Susan has become the most bitter person I have ever known. Her friends have gradually drifted away from her, for she is most intolerable. Her health is broken, and she is a nervous wreck.

Sally has been almost as bitter as Susan, but has tried to grasp what little pleasure life might still hold for her. For over a year she held a clerical job at a meager salary, trying to support herself, sister, and drunken brother. Financial matters then went awry and they were about to lose their home. Sally forestalled that disaster by eloping last week with the holder of the mortgage, who is, incidentally, the town miser, aged eighty-four.

Psychologists agree that there are more emotionally immature adults than we realize. Married life, in which one of the partners is not grown up emotionally, cannot but result in unnecessary unhappiness. Fortunately, some young adults are discerning and before it is too late see the symptoms of emotional immaturity in a prospective mate.

Parents are often more concerned with their children's success in academic work than they are in their development of understanding attitudes and skills that function in the life of the home. Such parents lack perspective and the sense of relative values. There are indeed people who, realizing their deficiencies, assiduously master these things later—even after marriage. On the other hand, when one is lacking in all such training and at the same time is emotionally immature, a normal married life is next to impossible.

An Expert in Tantrums

Jack had matured in many ways, but emotionally he had never

grown up. At home, if he were refused something, he proceeded to have a tantrum. He was a past master in the art, for it seemed to always bring his parents around to his point of view. His mother was especially easy to manage by this technique, and she sheltered him from other members of the family.

When Jack went away to college, he became very homesick and complained of everything. He became attached, however, to a girl who mothered him and gave in to him in nearly every instance. This girl, Grace, managed to persuade him to remain in college, during one of his homesick spells, when he had decided to leave and go home for good. After that Jack brought all his problems to Grace. She realized that he was still a little boy in many ways, but she had confidence that he had the making of a fine sort of man. She tried hard to help him stand on his own feet.

He could not or would not fit in with Grace's other friends. He expected all the attention to be centered on himself. Finally Grace became a little weary of her charge and decided that the task of making Jack over was hopeless. She became interested in another boy whom she was going to date, but insisted that she wanted to be as much of a friend to Jack as ever.

Jack was bewildered. He tried persuasion; he tried threats, but finally resorted to his old standby, the tantrum. This scene was too much for Grace. When Jack saw that she was really leaving him, he fell on the couch and sobbed. This brought Grace back into the room. Jack became very quiet and refused to speak and was apparently unconscious, but Grace saw through this ruse and walked out.

That evening she saw him again and told him that he was behaving himself like a baby, and that if he did not act more like a man, she would not have anything more to do with him. To show Grace that he cared nothing for her, he married a neighbor girl, but was soon divorced because he refused to leave his mother and establish a home of his own.

Jennie Took Her Husband Home

Jennie never went anywhere or did anything without the consent of her mother. While in school, she went with boys on whom her mother passed favorable judgment. There was one boy whom Jennie particularly liked, but when her mother realized this, she began to try to prejudice Jennie against the boy. Jennie very obediently dropped the boy entirely and began dating a boy of her mother's choice. She finally married this boy and brought him home to live, as she could not leave her "old mother and father" alone.

Soon after the marriage, the mother felt that the boy was not quite what she thought he was, and criticized him at every opportunity, even to his face. Jennie soon found that if she sided with her mother, there was less trouble. Jennie's husband stayed away from home as much as possible. After the birth of a little boy, things got worse.

The old people took over the responsibility of raising him, as "Jennie was not old enough." She was only thirty. Jennie now says and does everything she is told to do and asks her mother everytime she goes anywhere. The small son calls his grandparents "mamma" and "papa," and his own parents by their given names. Jennie looks to be about forty-five years of age, and has very little initiative. She reads quite a bit, sews some with her mother's aid and cooks a little.

She and her husband act as strangers rather than as a married couple. Jennie knows very little about caring for a house, her own child, financial matters, and the making of a home of her own. Her mother and father are in their late seventies and when they die, Jennie will not know which way to turn, in fact, I doubt if she will be able to turn at all.

"Just A Bowl of Cherries"

Walter was born in 1885 in a small Iowa town. He was a normal healthy baby, but early reflected his father's almost timid manner (the father was a scholarly man, tolerant in his attitudes, but self-centered and taking no part in community life). As a baby, Walter was not allowed to tumble on the floor in the manner of other babies, lest he might put into his mouth something not intended for food. After he had learned to walk, he was still kept close to his mother in order that he might avoid getting hurt or soiling his clothing (the mother often boasted that Walter was kept in white clothing until he was three years of age, and that his clothing was always laundered by her own hands).

Much was made of all Walter's childish ailments, and he was kept away from other children lest he contract some contagious disease. Until he was nine years of age, Walter's mother taught him at home; then when he started to school, all the boys in the block jeered him because his mother walked to school with him and met him at the edge of the school yard when it was time for him to return home in the afternoon. Walter proved himself like his father in scholarly tendencies; he had read widely when he was only twelve years of age, and the father was eager to direct his educational activities, but the mother was so intent on having the son follow certain lines that the father soon withdrew from the field in her favor.

At the age of fourteen, Walter was not in good physical condition, and a physician told Mrs. Walker that her son must spend more time in the open. An athletic director was hired to teach the boy to play tennis, and he soon became quite a good player, seemed to derive great pleasure from the sport despite the fact that the highschool boys with whom he played called him "Sis Walker."

At the age when Walter might have been expected to become interested in girls, he seemed to prefer his mother's company still to that of anyone else. The mother had never allowed even the father to form any relationship with the son independent of her; she constantly worked between them.

Everything in the home was made to center about the boy whose slightest physical indisposition threw the entire household into confusion. Mrs. Walker personally administered to Walter's every need, and even when he wished money, he went to his mother instead of to his father, although the latter was considered a good business man.

When Walter was ready for college, his mother closed her house; the father took a room in a local hotel, and Mrs. Walker and Walter went to live in a furnished house which she rented in the college town. Mrs. Walker remained with Walter until his senior year, at which time the father became seriously ill, and it was imperative for his wife to return to nurse him—but Walter came home each week-end.

On graduation, with a brilliant scholarship record, Walter entered the insurance business in his home town; his partner was an

experienced, aggressive business man, but the mother soon complained that Walter was not receiving a fair share of the profits of the business, so she took him to a western state where they proved up a claim on a homestead.

Upon their return to the home town, Walter became interested for the first time, in a pretty young girl in whose home he spent many evenings, but his mother became displeased with the attachment, and called the girl's mother by telephone to tell her that she would appreciate it if she, Mrs. Jones, would stop inviting Walter to her home so frequently.

Walter's second attachment was for a teacher who was young and attractive; she liked Walter very much, but put an end to the friendship because she could not reconcile herself to being teased by the other young women of her group about "Mom Walker's Little Boy."

Then came the World War. Walter was called and went to an officers' training camp in Florida. His mother offered her services for canteen work in the same town. A place was made for her since she was able to pay her own expenses, and she and Walter were "in the army" when the armistice was signed.

For two years thereafter, Walter was not well, and his mother went to the hospital with him. Returning to the home town, Walter went into a business in which he has been quite successful. The death of a relative brought him into a good estate, and he has handled it with good business judgment.

He owns the house in which he lives with his father and mother and a nice clean dog. He has a beautiful rose garden, and he is a great lover of good music. His excellent radio is in almost continuous use at the same time that he is reading in his fine library. He is a splendid citizen; he does a great deal of work in connection with the Chamber of Commerce, the Church, and the Rotary Club.

Walter is very sensitive and easily driven into silences prolonged and thoughtful. In the town in which he lives are three sisters near his own age whom he takes with him almost everywhere he goes, but he is rarely seen alone with the one for whom, rumor has it, he cares the most. His mother now sincerely wishes that he would marry Jane, who would be, in every way, a suitable wife for him. Walter looks older than his forty-five years, and he was recently heard to remark that the most expressive popular song is "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries."

V

THE ADOLESCENT SPEAKS FOR HIMSELF

And here ends our panorama of handicapped humans—a trail leading from infancy to middle age. When the book of life for each is closed, not all will be listed as failures; many will be salvaged along the way, but probably few of them will have matured as they should. Not a pleasing picture to be sure, but one that should be viewed by those interested in adolescents. The warning has been

given.

In the cases that we have just surveyed, conflict between parent and child has not been emphasized. Our attention has rather been turned to unwise attitudes and guidance on the part of the parents and the results in the life of the child.

Adolescence is, however, a period of development when there is apt to be more irritation arising from the parent-child relationship than at any other time. In early adolescence, there seems to be less love on the part of the adolescent for the parent and less love on the part of the parent for the adolescent than at any other time. This condition challenges the best judgment and understanding of parents. The average parent thinks of the adolescent as *being a problem* whereas he should think of the adolescent as *having a problem*, which he as a parent should help him to work out—the problem of growing up.

What can parents do to help their adolescent sons and daughters in the growing-up process? No suggestions could be more pertinent than those coming from the later stage of the adolescent period. The suggestions which are offered to parents come from college students who have studied the problems of the adolescent development. In the main, these students were away from home and not apt to be looking at the problem under immediate emotional stress, although some speak with considerable feeling, just considering these problems in retrospect. Most of them speak out of first hand experience. Their opinions are worth serious consideration by parents who really want a better understanding. We therefore turn now to the adolescent and let him speak for himself:

SUGGESTIONS FROM COLLEGE STUDENTS

"The reason that most 'mother's babies' are that way is because the mother wants it so."

"The child's independence and self-sufficiency should start to develop when he is a baby, not when he is old enough to vote."

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

"Treat adolescents as young adults."

"If a child is made to realize that he is a person with a person's responsibilities and a person's rights, he will naturally become more independent. This cannot be started with the best results at the high school age but must be started long before that.

"From the time that I was a baby, I was made to feel as if I were not a person as other people were. I was the youngest of a medium-sized family and was never expected to accept a bit of responsibility in any way. I was always supposed to be the baby of the family who was to be humored but not to be taken seriously. In fact, my family made me feel like a first-class imbecile all my life, and I think that many parents make this same mistake. If one is made to feel that his thoughts and responsibilities are important, he will naturally live up to the standard set for him."

"Treat them as adults and respect their ideas even if you do consider them a little 'crack pot.' "

"Give the boy or girl responsibility that will give a sense of importance. Make him feel his importance to the rest of the family. If the father is away, allow the adolescent boy to take his place. Let him sit at the head of the table. Permit him to drive the family car. On the other hand, if the mother is away for a few days, permit the daughter to select groceries, prepare meals, and take charge of the housecleaning."

"Let the mother stay in bed a couple of mornings a week with Jane preparing the breakfast."

"Give the child responsibility, something to do around the house, the success or failure of which will depend upon him."

"Let the adolescent choose his own clothes. After all, he is the one who has to wear them."

"If you have guided your daughter in developing good taste in clothes, let her go shopping 'on her own.' Let her select her own dresses, shoes, and hats. If you approve of her choice tell her so. If you do not approve, give her constructive suggestions instead of telling her that you will never let her do it again because of her poor taste. Remember: You are responsible for her tastes."

"Give your son the thrill of enrolling in school by himself, and as far as you can, let him make his own adjustments to his teachers and associates. For heaven's sake, don't go tell his teachers how sensitive he is and make him look silly before his friends."

"Don't pry into the child's business, correspondence, plans, etc. Let him tell you what he wants to tell you. He has the right to a certain amount of privacy."

"Ask their opinions frequently and by using them, when you can, show them that you value their opinions and that they have a responsibility."

"See that the child stays away from home for a night or more occasionally, visiting friends or relatives, at slumber parties or at camps."

"See that the child exhausts all his own means of self-assistance before giving help. Then suggest other means of approach, rather than doing the thing for him."

"Instruct him fully and simply about sex (should be started before adolescence)."

If all parents attempted to follow out these suggestions, there would be fewer handicapped adolescents and fewer unhappy marriages. Furthermore, there would be less friction between adolescents and parents. Remember that in early colonial days the adolescent married and was responsible for the running of a home. Further, remember that one learns only through experience.

Does it mean nothing that over and over again certain suggestions recur? The following suggestions of these adolescents might well be framed and kept before the constant attention of parents?

"LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU ARE THEIR FRIENDS AND NOT THEIR BOSSES."

"GIVE LOGICAL REASONS FOR OBEDIENCE, RATHER THAN TRYING TO GET IT BY DEMANDING AND COMMANDING. AN ADOLESCENT IS WILLING TO MEET HIS PARENTS HALF WAY, IF THEY WILL ONLY TREAT HIM AS A 'NEARLY-GROWN UP.' "

"BE A GUIDE AND COUNSELOR IN HELPING THEM, NOT A DICTATOR."

"BE DIGNIFIED IN YOUR DEMANDS: DO NOT JUST TALK AND TALK AND NEVER GET ANYWHERE."

"TREAT HIM AS A THINKING HUMAN BEING AND NOT AS A POOR EXAMPLE OF AN IMBECILE! SOUNDS FOOLISH, BUT SOME PARENTS TREAT THEM THAT WAY."

"BE A GOOD LISTENER AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND."

"LAUGH WITH HIM, NOT AT HIM."

"BY COURTEOUS TREATMENT OF THE CHILD, EXPECT HIM TO BE COURTEOUS TO YOU."

"MAKE THEIR INTERESTS YOUR INTERESTS, RATHER THAN JUST BEING INTERESTED."

The adolescent may be impulsive, unreasonable, and altogether too cocksure of his opinions; he may seem to have too little consideration for the feelings of his parents;

and his talk may be "big" and inclined to shock the complacency of the parents and cause no little unrest; but however irritating and distressing all this may be to the parents, they cannot deny that the adolescent is making a determined effort to grow up. Had the parents understood better the growing-up process when the child was younger, and guided him wisely, the irritation of these days would have been greatly reduced.

There is, however, a brighter side to this picture. There are many mothers who realize the importance of their children growing up and do much to help them in developing a full set of maturities.

Following are statements from adolescents themselves. Some of them tell of parents who constructively helped them in the process of maturing. In a less direct form, they tell of the appreciation on the part of these adolescents for what their parents did for them—in helping them to grow up and cast off the immaturities of childhood.

One young adult in later adolescence summed up her early adolescent attitudes as follows:

"When I was about fifteen years of age, my whole attitude toward life changed. I resented my mother and father telling me what to do—particularly my mother. I felt as though I were grown and fully able to decide things for myself. My mother and I could never agree on my clothes. I wanted to stay out late nights and bitterly resented my father's orders to be in early. I no longer enjoyed an evening at home with the family. I always wanted to be out doing something or at least having my friends over to the house. I never resented my father's orders so much as I did my mother's. I felt as though she were treating me like a mere child. I wanted to make my own decisions about everything.

"I began to criticize my mother's mode of dress. I wanted her to dress like my generation. It seemed to me that she was very old-fashioned about many things. My father also seemed very old-fashioned to me. It seemed that my parents were completely out of date with the rest of the world."

Another young adult, looking back on his own early adolescent period, comments rather philosophically in the following words:

"When a child enters the adolescent stage of life, he often finds

it difficult to agree with his parents about matters such as late hours, spending money, use of the family car, etc. These small differences sometimes lead to open quarrels and arguments. Usually the son or daughter feels that he is the one who has been mistreated and wronged. Consequently, he carries a 'chip on his shoulder' until he realizes how foolish he has been. Such relationships may continue for some time, but generally the family returns to its harmonious living when the child reaches later adolescence."

The quotations that follow tell their own story: a story of parents who wisely helped their sons and daughters, in the process of growing up.

"When I was very small, we lived on a ranch. There weren't any children near for me to play with, so when I was very young my mother and father taught me to entertain myself. When I got lonesome, it was up to me to find something to do and not go running to my mother or father to stop whatever they were doing to entertain me.

"I was forever climbing trees. I would get to the top only to find that I could not get down so easily as I got up. I would immediately call my mother to assist me, but she would always reply: 'You got up, now get down the way you got up.' Sometimes it would take a long time to get down again, but I surely learned to rely on myself."

"My mother helped me gain self-reliance and emancipation from childhood by giving me certain duties at home that were left entirely up to my judgment and decision, and were actually my responsibilities.

"I was taught to think of other people's feelings, to sympathize with them, and to share my possessions with them. This tended to develop unselfishness in me. Of course I am probably a little selfish, but it isn't my mother's fault."

"I was encouraged to spend nights with my girl friends and relatives. As a result, I don't get homesick now in college. My mother has led me to see the importance of a college education, as well as making friends and mingling with people. I am thus enjoying college and am looking forward to the day when I shall hold a position and be able to care for myself and help my family as they have helped me."

"I have been allowed to make all my own decisions—not only as to going places or doing things, but also in buying my clothes. Of course, I have always asked my parents if they cared if I did certain things. Occasionally they say that they would rather that I wouldn't do such and such, but they have said 'No' very few times, and then they have always made me see and understand why they said it. They have taught me to use my own judgment in all matters. In buying clothes I always take my mother along, but the final decision is up to me.

"They have made me feel that they trusted me in every way; consequently, I have tried doubly hard not to ever disappoint them. I think that they have done a great deal to help me gain self-reliance."

"My parents have always let me make suggestions and solve my own problems in so far as I was able. Now I talk to my parents about my problems, but I always work them out myself.

"I have my own allowance, and I profit by that. I have picked out my own clothes for a long time; in fact, I have also helped my mother choose her clothes.

"Since I have been old enough, I have done all the grocery shopping, which I enjoy very much. At times, I wouldn't do so well, but I profited by my mistakes, and now I think that I can make just as good selections as my mother."

"Mother talked things over with me and allowed me to make suggestions. Of course she did not always follow them, because mine were often very impractical; but it made me feel that I was more than just a little girl: that I was sort of an equal with my mother. This has accounted for the very good friendship between mother and me. We are the very best of friends and have very good times together. Of course we aren't perfect by any means, and at times I feel that I am terribly held back, but because I know that my mother understands me and I understand her, I feel that I can always talk things over with her and she will understand me and not feel that I am resenting her desire to help me."

VI

THE PROFESSOR ADDS A POSTSCRIPT

It would hardly seem fair to the reader to leave this presentation of the problem of growing up without at least indicating some of its less apparent aspects, pointing out certain implications and making a few positive suggestions. What follows is addressed to parents, teachers and students of adolescence, with the thought that it may stimulate their thinking along constructive lines, and the hope that such thinking may result in action beneficial both to themselves and to society.

First: There are many mothers who have never grown up themselves, and yet it takes a mature mother to guide a child properly from infancy to adulthood. Such infantile mothers are victims of the training or lack of training of their own mothers of the previous generation. In turn their children are destined to suffer from their shortcomings. The immature mother is governed by impulse and emotion; she gives comparatively little thought to the more fundamental problems of her child's development. Unfortunately many such mothers are not conscious of their im-

maturity. On the other hand, there are those who are aware of the deficiency, and it is they who have the best chance of meeting the very real and personal problem of growing up themselves.

Secondly: Because of her physiological makeup, the mother is motivated, to a greater extent than is the father, by the so-called tender emotions. The very process of giving birth to a human being—a part of herself—together with the nursing function, is largely responsible for the emotional reactions of the mother toward her child, especially toward her babe. The mother is dependent upon the child for the satisfaction of this strong emotional craving—a craving that is inextricably tied up with the physiological. What is not fully enough understood is that the love of the mother for the babe is love at its lowest level: a sort of glorified, highly emotionalized, “doll-playing” type of love.

It is easy for the mother to love her baby and easy to secure the baby's love for her. But, unless reason prevails, this emotionalized relationship is apt to be kept at a level that should be outgrown by both mother and child. As the child is expected to mature, so the attachment between mother and child should be expected to mature, to the advantage of both.

The psychologist looks upon love as developing and changing from infancy to adulthood. It is an increasing love, growing deeper and deeper, if allowed to develop normally. To secure and hold the love and lasting friendship of an adolescent son or daughter is a different thing from securing the love of an infant. Such a love calls for a mutual understanding and real friendship. This is quite different from the more purely physiological and emotional relationship between mother and babe.

The infant's love is self-centered and egocentric and is satisfied by physical sensations. Through conditioning, love for the mother begins to manifest itself by the middle of the first year of life, because the mother is the one

who has given the babe these physical satisfactions. As the child grows older the father enters more and more into the picture and love for the father is normally added to love for the mother, followed by love for other members of the family. When this turn toward others occurs, the mother may feel that she is losing something of that which before was wholly hers—a feeling quite understandable. Then the child's love (used in the psychological sense) expands to include companions and playmates. At the time of this transition, the poor mother sometimes experiences even greater pangs. Her "baby" seems more interested in his playmates than he does in her. Soon comes adolescence when her son talks glibly about his love for girls—other women! The climax comes when he solemnly informs his parents that he has found the one girl in all the world and that he is going to marry. Can she stand it all? Hard? No doubt about it. But if her relationship with her son has matured as he has matured, she will, in spite of temporary grief, see in it all a fulfillment of her years of guidance and be happy in spite of her grief.

Thirdly: Woman herself is now the victim of a changing society. Adjustment is often very difficult. It involves a change of habits and attitudes. Some have made it, some have not. In this respect women have a much greater problem of adjustment than have men. And these very problems of adjustment have a marked effect upon the attitudes of mothers toward their children.

The part the mother plays in the household economy and the social life of the community has undergone great changes due especially to the departure of industries from the home, the consequent increase in urban population, and the many services and labor-saving devices now at the disposal of the individual housewife. The demands upon the mother in the home are not what they were. Activities in the modern home of the middle class are less constructive and more routine. Products necessary for family subsistence and comfort that used to call for the planning, in-

genuity, and skill of the mother are now produced by the turning on of an electric switch, an order over the telephone, or a visit to the department store.

Unless the mother looks upon these fruits of progress as blessings that have set energies free for other worth-while activities, she is apt to fall into habits and attitudes that are detrimental to herself and family. For too many an unfortunate mother life has lost its challenge. Her activities are artificial in nature to a large extent, often things to pass away the time. Though she may not be aware of all this, the effects are there. Her life is lacking in a sense of accomplishment, engulfed in a vast futility.

Leta S. Hollingworth, in the classic chapter on "psychological weaning" contained in her book *The Psychology of Adolescence*, attributes the lack of psychological weaning to the influence of two types of mothers: the over-solicitous mother and the domineering mother.

Many a mother, the slave of routine and the victim of unwisely planned leisure finds justification for her personal existence in an over-concern for the details of the life of her child. She becomes so solicitous about his every need that she hampers him in his normal development toward adulthood.

The domineering mother has been with us through generations past. It is easier to dominate than to guide, and how often we take the easiest way in spite of the outcome. The domineering mother seldom realizes that she dominates, or else she advances "good" reasons why her method is best. There are all degrees of domination in the home, all kinds of autocracy from the most dictatorial to the benevolent—and right here in the United States of America. "Why must I do that, mother?" and the autocratic answer comes quickly: "Because I said so." Autocracy in the home exists all the way from this, through the "Mother knows best" type, to the more subtle forms of dictation and domination. The same forms of autocracy

are found in business and industrial relationships. Why?

The challenge to parents to demonstrate democracy in the home provides a vital task for mothers as well as for fathers. And there is nothing artificial about it. It demands thought, planning, consistency, and the development of a genuine spirit of understanding and co-operation. The adolescent who has a feeling of gratefulness growing out of the fact that he is understood and that his opinions are respected is the one who is most apt to show consideration for the needs and rights of others. Parents who work for democracy in the home are working for democracy in general. The blessings fall on the country, the children, and on the parents themselves.

As a nation, we are committed to the democratic way of life; but if we are to perpetuate that democracy, it must be understood by each rising generation. It must be lived. This fact presents a challenge to every mother, every father, every teacher.

Democracy is a mode of life; a mode of life that is learned in the school and in the home; a mode of life that grows out of the atmosphere of the home and the school. Children need to know what democracy really is and they can understand it only by participating in it. Much has been written of what the school can do to teach democracy but very little has been said as to what the home can do. And yet, in many ways, the home is the best proving ground that democracy has. It is in the home that children can really experience democracy. It is there that all members of the family, young and old, take responsibilities, talk over plans for the good of the family, and learn the necessity of frequently giving up for the good of the whole.

There are homes in which the everyday living of the family is a stimulating example of democracy in action, and at its best. But on the other hand, unfortunately, there are homes in which autocracy is being demonstrated and its precepts carried out into the social and economic

world by the children who learn it in the home.

Adolescents want democracy in the home and it is their right to have it. As put very aptly and in simple terms by one adolescent: "We want parents who stand beside us and not over us."

Today, however, democracy is under fire. There are attacks from within and attacks from without. There are inequalities of opportunities among our citizens that are glaringly inconsistent with the spirit of democracy. Freedom of speech is often thwarted. Our economic system is askew and unemployment is widespread. Social and economic relationships are so complex that even conscientious and trained experts cannot always agree on the solution of present-day problems, while selfish interests often stand in the way of improvement. Modern youth will face grave problems of applied democracy in the not too distant future.

About one third of today's unemployed are under twenty-four years of age—many of them high school and college graduates who have looked forward with anticipation and hope of vocational competency and a home of their own, only to find this impossible. Economic dependency is thus further extended in spite of the fact that the youth of today is as eager as ever to achieve a condition of self-support. How long will it take under present conditions, for this normal craving to be stifled?

There are few jobs for young people, no matter how well qualified. Competition for most jobs is so keen that the young are selling their services at a rate so low that it is impossible for them to set up and maintain homes of their own according to the American standard. The failure of our society to cope with technological changes—responsible, to a large extent, for this condition—raises serious problems as to what the future holds for the coming generation. The economic and social order is out of joint and youth is suffering therefrom, to say nothing of children in the homes of unemployed parents. How shortsighted then, is the woman who limits her interests to the

home, overly concerning herself with her child's immediate needs but giving little thought either to the development of his independence or to the social and economic conditions of the world in which he must find his place.

But what can the mother do? The days of the old town meeting are largely a thing of the past. Those who control our federal and even our state government seem far away and little influenced by the voice of a single citizen.

There is no woman, however, who cannot find opportunities to learn more of the problems and dangers of a democracy as well as of its blessings and even to aid in accomplishing its social ends. In fact there are many agencies of enlightenment, many influential organizations of all kinds, both local and national, pleading for the aid of parents in making our country a place of greater opportunity for youth and a better place in which to live.

The professor therefore adds this postscript to what the adolescent himself has said:

"Instead of handicapping the adolescent by domination and oversolicitousness, let him be guided wisely, through a normal maturing, to an adulthood in which he will manifest a true democratic spirit, learned in a truly democratic home. Let parents accept the challenge of playing the bigger role—of doing the adults' part in making our society one in which not only their own adolescent sons and daughters but all youth will have the advantages of a real democracy."

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